

sat in horror as I watched Mr. Rumsfeld say, I am sorry about what happened; I think this is a critical time for our American families who have soldiers who have been killed, but this is war and we should expect that people are going to lose their lives in war. We are going to be in Iraq for a long time, and I am paraphrasing what he said, and we are not going to cut and run. These are the words that Mr. Rumsfeld and the President of the United States were using: we are not going to cut and run.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy to talk about making sacrifices when it is somebody else's child. I guess it is pretty easy to talk about we should expect that people are going to die. I am never comfortable with that kind of talk. I am never comfortable with the fact that any leader would try and sanitize the trauma of the death of our soldiers and speak about it in such a way.

Mr. Speaker, we are aware that we do not see our soldiers' bodies being brought home. There are those who are saying that we do not see the bodies coming in because there is a plot and a plan by this administration to keep it out of public view, to not have the body bags returning in a way that Americans will focus on it.

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Mr. Speaker, I am here to say that this administration can attempt to hide or to deny, to not allow the ceremonies to take place in honor of our soldiers as we have done in the past, but that is only going to anger the American public. Americans will not take kindly to dismissing the deaths of our soldiers. They will not take kindly to any attempts to change the protocol that we had gotten used to when we could, for a moment, stop and focus on the fact that lives had been lost and provide a ceremony in honor of them for all of the American public to see.

Mr. Speaker, while I am here talking about veterans, and I am trying to make the connection between how we can do better by those in Iraq than we are doing by those who have already served long before them, whether it was in the Vietnam War, whether it was in Desert Storm, whether it was in World War II, I am anxious to send a message this evening, and that message is that the people of this country want to see this administration and the Members of this Congress do better by our soldiers and our veterans. I am hopeful that we will not have to see our American people become so angry that they embarrass this administration and this President by demanding that we get the truth, that we understand exactly what is happening, that our soldiers are taken care of, that they are brought back in the traditional ceremonies that we have gotten used to. I want Mr. Rumsfeld and the President of the United States to look the press in the eye and show that they are truly sorry for the deaths that are being caused. I do not wish our leaders,

whether it is the President or Mr. Rumsfeld, to just say in so many words: Get used to it. The sacrifices have to be made, that this is what war is all about and this is what we are going to be experiencing for some time to come.

Again, these are not the kind of words that people want to hear. This is not the kind of truth that the administration would like to confront. But as a Member of Congress, elected by the people to represent, I take this time leading up to Veterans Day to not only talk about our soldiers in Iraq but to say over and over again, we can do better by our veterans. We must do better by our veterans. Again, as it was said by the gentlewoman from Georgia, on Veterans Day, Members of Congress and leaders all across this country will be going to ceremonies. They will be at the veterans hospitals. They will be at the various VFW posts. They will be in places where veterans are. And they will talk about how they honor the sacrifices that our veterans have made. But what they will not talk about is what are we going to do to get the homeless veterans off the street? What are we going to do to create more cemetery space for our veterans? What are we going to do to reduce the long waiting times and the long waiting periods that our veterans are experiencing at our VA hospitals?

But, Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful because of the Democrats, because of our bill, because we are saying what is possible, and we have laid it out in a very clear and concise way, that the veterans themselves in the middle of these ceremonies will look the Members of Congress and others in the eye and instead of allowing them to get away with the ceremonial side of this, will ask about the substantive side of the public policy issues and say: What are you doing to protect us or to provide services for us, to make sure that you respect the investments that we have made.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, when the Nation observes Veterans' Day, our collective purpose is to thank the men and women who have faithfully worn the uniform of the country's armed services for the service and sacrifice that has kept us strong and free.

But I think we should thank veterans for something else, as well.

In addition to their service in the military, we should also express the Nation's gratitude for the unshakeable foundation of patriotic citizenship that veterans have always provided in civilian life—and that the country cannot do without, especially during times of peril such as these.

Veterans never stop fighting for a free and secure country.

They have fought for a strong defense and strong foreign policy. They have fought for integrity and responsibility in government. They have fought to protect the U.S. flag and all it represents, including the respect we owe to those who have paid the price for freedom. They have fought for the benefits veterans have earned and deserve, including disability benefits for those who have suffered perma-

nent injuries in military service. They have fought for the American ideal of freedom and justice for all.

Those of us who serve in Congress should thank veterans not only by making speeches, but also by rolling up our sleeves and addressing the critical unmet needs of our veterans' population.

We need to act on long-pending "concurrent receipt" legislation so that we no longer deny disability payments to military retirees. Last year, Congress provided some new benefits to disabled retirees in lieu of concurrent receipt. But many disabled veterans still do not believe equity has been achieved. There is nothing that justifies a denial of these benefits to any eligible veteran, and Congress should correct this wrong right now.

We need to improve the veterans' health care system so that we no longer have a backlog of more than 100,000 veterans who are waiting six months or more to receive the care they need. Some veterans are waiting up to a year or more. This means many are getting sicker while they wait, and I fear some are not making it. This is intolerable.

We need the most cost-effective system possible, and I have no quarrel with the concept of the Veterans' Administration's Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services program. But we need to make sure that any reorganization does not end up downsizing or eliminating facilities that veterans need, thereby reducing access even more.

We need a VA budget that meets the needs—not one that falls below the new fiscal year's authorization by \$1.8 billion and barely keeps pace with inflation. I believe we need to cut taxes to stimulate the economy and provide relief to middle and lower income working Americans, but we do not need to provide an average tax cut of \$88,326 to Americans earning more than \$1 million a year when we could trim that amount by just a few thousand dollars and save enough revenue to take care of some of our critical needs.

We need to fulfill the country's promise to our fellow Americans who have devoted a substantial part of their lives in defense of the country, many putting their lives on the line.

We live in difficult and dangerous times.

But we should be confident about the country's ability to meet the grave challenges we face.

As long as we have people in our country who stand ready to make whatever effort and sacrifice is necessary, we should be confident that our Nation has what it takes to defeat the forces that would do us harm and that we will succeed in advancing the cause of freedom for our generation and for generations to come.

As our veterans demonstrate every day, patriotism is alive and well.

And that should give us all hope for the future.

As we celebrate Veterans' Day, 2003, let us say to all of the Nation's 25.1 million veterans: "We thank you, we support you, we need you, and may God bless you for keeping the country free and strong."

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEARCE). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. FATTAH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business in the district.

Mr. TURNER of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. BOEHLERT (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of personal reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BROWN of Ohio) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EDWARDS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. MURPHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BEREUTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MILLER of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PENCE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, November 6.

Mr. MCCOTTER, for 5 minutes, November 6.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1132. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and enhance certain benefits for survivors of veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; in addition to the Committee on Armed Services for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

S. 1720. An act to provide for Federal court proceedings in Plano, Texas; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, November 6, 2003, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5061. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company CF6-6 Series Turbofan Engines [Docket No. 2002-NE-24-AD; Amendment 39-13144; AD 2003-10-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5062. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Model AS 350B3, SA-365N, N1, AS-365N3, and EC 155B Helicopters [Docket No. 2002-SW-17-AD; Amendment 39-13330; AD 2003-20-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5063. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Beatrice, NE [Docket No. FAA-2003-15461; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-59] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5064. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Wayne, NE [Docket No. FAA-2003-15718; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-60] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5065. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH Model EC135P1, P2, T1, and T2 Helicopters [Docket No. 2003-SW-08-AD; Amendment 39-13329; AD 2003-20-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5066. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Lee's Summit, MO [Docket No. FAA-2003-15722; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-64] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5067. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dornier Model 328-300 Series Airplanes Equipped With Certain Pratt & Whitney PW306B Engines Nacelles [Docket No. 2001-NM-319-AD; Amendment 39-13320; AD 2003-20-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received

October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5068. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Aurora, MO [Docket No. FAA-2003-15460; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-58] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5069. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company CF34-3A1, -3B, and -3B1 Turbofan Engines [Docket No. 2001-NE-21-AD; Amendment 39-13337; AD 2003-05-10R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5070. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Meade, KS [Docket No. FAA-2003-15723; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-65] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5071. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Sullivan, MO [Docket No. FAA-2003-15721; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-63] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5072. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; PILATUS Aircraft Ltd. Model PC-7 Airplanes [Docket No. 2003-CE-29-AD; Amendment 39-13323; AD 2003-20-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5073. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Centerville, IA [Docket No. FAA-2003-15724; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-66] received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5074. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Pratt & Whitney Canada Models PW118, PW120, PW120A, and PW121 Turboprop Engines [Docket No. 2003-NE-11-AD; Amendment 39-13338; AD 2003-21-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5075. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (EMBRAER) Model EMB-135 and -145 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 2003-NM-64-AD; Amendment 39-13132; AD 2003-09-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received October 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5076. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Univair Aircraft Corporation Models Alon A-2 and A2-A; ERCO 415-C, 415-CD, 415-D, 415-E, and 415-G; Forney F-1 and F-1A; and Mooney M10 Airplanes [Docket No. 2002-CE-58-AD; Amendment 39-13335; AD 2003-21-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64)